



# Primary Press

## Back-to-School



Whether your child had a jam-packed summer of activities or if it was filled with complaints that they were bored and had nothing to do, kids often have a tough time making the transition back-to-school. As with any new situation, like starting school for the first time or entering a new grade, kids need time to adjust.



Remind them that everyone feels a little nervous about the first day of school and that it will become an everyday routine in no time. It is important to talk with kids about their worries and offer reassurance.

Emphasize the positive things about going to school, such as seeing old friends or making new ones, and buying school supplies, a backpack or a new outfit for the first day.



To help ease the back-to-school butterflies, try to transition kids into a consistent school-night routine a few weeks before school starts. Establish a reasonable bedtime routine so your child will be well-rested and ready to learn. Children are more alert and do better in school if they eat a good breakfast every day.



Make sure that young children are able to recognize their names, know their address and phone number, their numbers up to 20 and basic shapes and colors. Having mastered these activities will give your child confidence during the first few weeks of school.



With older children review their math facts from the year before and keep reading as a daily routine. This practice will also help your child be more prepared for the first day of school. Remember school should be a positive and enriching experience.

## County of Loudoun Family Services

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*The smell of fresh paper  
School books, backpacks, new  
friends smile  
The first day is near*



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## Lunch To Go

When making preparations for your child's school lunch, get organized. Have a cabinet or container designated for all the various food storage containers and bags along with plastic flatware, napkins and all of the non-refrigerated food that you approve of for lunches. You might also want to have a special place in the refrigerator just for lunch supplies such as cheese sticks, vegetables, fruits and meats. Let your family know these areas are off limits for snacking. Now that everything for preparing lunches is organized and in one place, it is easy to keep things stocked and readily available.



Packing lunches the night before while working on after-dinner clean-up is a great way to relieve morning stress and use leftover's for a healthy lunch the next day.

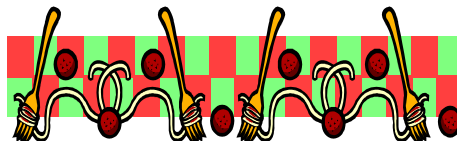
Try filling plastic containers with va-

nilla yogurt and blueberries and put them in the freezer. In the morning add this frozen container to your child's lunchbox and by lunchtime it's a delightful cold healthy treat.



A thermos is not just for hot items but also cold. Make a smoothie and pour into a thermos for an exciting addition to the lunchbox. Other items to keep cool and add to a thermos are tuna or chicken salad. Cook some pasta in fun shapes and add to the thermos with a side of dipping sauce. There are many different things that can be used for dipping such as salsa, hummus, bean dip, yogurt and salad dressings.

When the weather gets cooler, don't forget to use a thermos for some hot



soups, warmed up leftovers, noodles with red sauce or rice and beans.

Instead of making sandwiches, consider making the ingredients separately so your child could assemble the sandwich themselves. Another idea is to roll lunch meat around cheese and slice to make pinwheels. Try something other than white bread like rice cakes, mini waffles, mini croissants, pita breads, lavash, small bagels, tortillas, focaccia, raisin or cinnamon bread.



Other healthy finger foods to add to the lunchbox are dried fruits, unsalted nuts, pretzels and baked crackers.

Lastly, include a surprise to bring a smile to your child's face such as a sticker, an I Love You note, or their snack tied up with a ribbon.

## Lunchbox Safety

Soft, insulated lunch bags are the best choice for keeping lunches cold. No matter what type of lunch container you choose, you should definitely use an ice pack to keep the food cold. Frozen gel packs are a perfect choice. You could also freeze a small juice box to pack in your lunch. This will keep your lunch cold and by the time you are ready to eat, your frozen drink will have melted.

When your child returns home from school, have them clean out their lunch box. Throw away any



uneaten food, wrappers and trash. Wash the lunch box with warm soapy water and allow to air dry, this will help prevent bacteria from growing that could make your child sick. Teach your child to wash their hands before eating their lunch or pack some moist towelettes for them to sanitize their hands. Your child is learning healthy habits.

## Book Corner

### Little School

By Beth Norling

This delightful picture book follows twenty four-year-olds through their busy day of preparation for school. This is a perfect book for a child who is starting preschool or daycare and wants to know exactly what to expect.

### First Day Jitters

By Julie Danneberg

It's the first day of school and Sarah Jane Hartwell does not want to go to her new school. She is scared. This book funny and has a surprise ending that will cause the reader to laugh out loud and then go back and read the entire story again.



### I Don't Want to Go Back to School

By Marisabina Russo

Ben worries about what his second grade teacher will be like, about his bus ride, whether anyone will remember him and much more. The situation is not helped by his older sister who keeps teasing him and increasing his fears. However, on the first day of school Ben finds that his fears were groundless.



### The Berenstain Bears Go to School

By Stan and Jan Berenstain

Brother Bear is looking forward to starting school, but Sister Bear is not. She is fearful. She and her mother visit her classroom and meet her new teacher before school starts. Sister Bear feels a little better when she rides the bus on the first day of school and sees all of her friends. By the end of the first day, she is delighted she is now in kindergarten.

### Welcome to Kindergarten

By Anne Rockwell

Tim visits his kindergarten classroom where he will be attending in the fall. When he first visits the classroom he is intimidated by its size, but by the time he finishes exploring all of the activity centers and enjoying cookies with the teacher, Tim decides the classroom is the right size.

### Sam & Gram and the First Day of School

By Dianne Blomberg, Ph.D.

Sam is used to spending the day with his Gram until his parents get home from work. Sam is worried he will miss his family while he is at school, and indeed, that is what happens. Sam becomes involved with activities at school and plays with the other children. When Sam returns home he tells his Gram about his day including

how he missed his family. Sam realizes after talking with his Gram that he had a good day at school and made some new friends.



### I Am Not Going to School Today

By Margaret K. McElderry

A little boy's first day of school jitters are consoled by having his special stuffed animal join him.

### Garmann's Summer

By Stian Hole

The author uses poetic text and humor to resolve a six-year-old child's fear and uncertainty of starting school for the first time.

### Emily's First 100 Days of School

By Rosemary Wells

This story is Emily's account of what happens each day of the first 100 days of school. Each day features a large number, an illustration and Emily's account of something that happened that is related to that number. On the 100th day of school, the children share something related to 100. One child brings 100 pieces of candy corn and another child runs 100 yards.



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### Primary Press

## Choosing the Right Backpack

Backpacks come in all sizes, colors, fabrics and shapes and can help children of all ages express their own personal sense of style. When used properly, backpacks are incredibly handy.

Many packs feature multiple compartments that help students stay organized

while they tote their books and papers from home to school. Packs that are on wheels may be good options for students who have to lug around heavy loads, but they are extremely difficult to pull up stairs or through the snow. Some schools do not allow rolling packs because they cause a tripping hazard in the hallways. Check with your child's school before purchasing one of these rolling packs.

Here are some things to consider when choosing a pack for your children.

- Two wide, padded shoulder straps
- A padded back that prevents chil-

dren from being poked in the back with sharp objects

- A waist belt and multiple compartments will help distribute weight more evenly across their body
- Backpacks are made of many different materials. Test backpacks before filled and remember they all will be considerably heavier when filled. Some materials are better for inclement weather than others.

